

2016 ANNUAL OPERATING INSTRUCTIONS

Glenwood Ranger District
Gila National Forest

Alma Allotment #400

Prepared By: /s/ DK Brown
District Range Staff

Date: 01/26/2016

Approved By: /s/ Vernon Lente for Anne L. Casey
District Ranger

Date: 01/26/2016

Annual Operating Instructions

I. INTRODUCTION

Kendall Brown (Forest Service) met with Bryan Davis (ranch manager) on January 26, 2016 to discuss management of the Alma Allotment during the current grazing year and to plan grazing management for the upcoming grazing season. These Annual Operating Instructions are the result of that discussion.

Term Permitted Livestock Numbers:

| Permittee | Number & Class of livestock | Dates |
|----------------|-----------------------------|---------------|
| L-H Ranch, LLC | 300 Cow/Calf | 03/01 – 02/28 |

Authorized Use:

| Permittee | Number & Class of livestock | Dates |
|----------------|-----------------------------|---------------|
| L-H Ranch, LLC | 300 Cow/Calf | 03/01 – 02/28 |

Pasture Rotations:

| Class of Livestock | Rotation Date | Pasture |
|--------------------|---------------|---|
| Cow/Calf | 03/01 – 05/15 | Barlow Basin & Cradle Mesa (split herd) |
| Cow/Calf | 05/15 – 11/15 | Cradle Mesa (entire herd) |
| Cow/Calf | 11/15 – 02/28 | Barlow Basin & Round Mtn (split herd) |
| Cow/Calf | 03/01 – 02/28 | Twin Sisters (Holding/Relief) * |

* Pastures that are scheduled for holding and/or doctoring. Livestock can be used until allowable use is reached.

The above schedule for stocking the allotment depends upon the availability of forage and water. Some flexibility in the above pasture rotation dates will be allowed for justifiable causes such as weather conditions, livestock management needs, and range conditions. If there is a need to deviate from the above pasture rotation schedule by more than 15 days, you must notify the Ranger District of the proposed change in the pasture rotation date and the reason for the change. A deviation from the above schedule of more than 15 days must be approved verbally or in writing. Credit/Refund applications will not be processed unless District personnel have been notified either in advance or at the time of removal of stock.

II. MANAGEMENT OF LIVESTOCK

The permittee is responsible for monitoring water availability and forage utilization and moving livestock when sufficient water is no longer available or when proper forage utilization is achieved in a pasture. The permittee is responsible for keeping track of and maintaining control of livestock. In the event livestock are found to be out of the scheduled pasture, it is required to find, gather, and return those animals to the proper pasture as soon as possible.

III. IMPROVEMENT MAINTENANCE

All range improvements assigned in the 10-year Term Grazing Permit are to be maintained in a functioning condition. In the event these improvements cannot be brought up to a functioning condition, you should notify the Range Staff at the Glenwood Ranger District to schedule them for reconstruction as funds become available.

We discussed building a fence to split Cradle Mesa to improve distribution. Kendall and Brian will get together to determine route and get appropriate clearances.

We also discussed laying a waterline above ground from Burns Well (private) to Twin Sisters Corral/storage/trough. Brian will get with NM OSE to determine necessary paperwork for change in point-of-distribution, etc. Kendall will prepare a water use agreement between FS and L - H Ranch LLC and a permit modification (1 ½ mile approximate pipeline).

We discussed the need to put water-lot fencing around the following tanks:

- Middle
- Hobble Steer
- Little Round
- Hell Acre

Kendall will check on appropriate clearances and prepare a permit modification prior to work commencing.

IV. GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

1. Fire: Branding and warming fires should be used with good judgment - not on windy days or during times when fires are specifically restricted. The Glenwood District may allow naturally ignited fires to burns on the district this coming year. We will notify you and solicit your input if we plan to let a fire burn on your allotment.

2. Records: In order to close out permit modifications you must provide documentation of materials and labor constituting your contribution to the permit modification.

You must provide documentation of cattle numbers such as dates of entering and leaving pastures. This information is used to substantiate the carrying capacity of the allotment. The information demonstrates use and the need for forage to meet the economic needs of the county. This information may also be used to establish cause and effect if there is a significant change in calf crop (Example, a wolf pack becomes established near your allotment).

3. Heavy Equipment Use: Please notify district well in advance of any plans to use heavy equipment so that necessary clearances and/or permits can be obtained. You will be notified by the district when you can proceed.

4. Credit/Refund: Any credit or refund applications for grazing fees must be made as far in advance as possible. Credit/Refund applications are not retroactive and will be approved only if the District Ranger is notified of livestock removal, prior to, or at the time, the livestock are taken off the allotment. You will be required to provide your Social Security or Tax ID number in order for a refund to be processed.

6. Salting and Supplemental Feeding:

- a. Feeding of hay or other bulk feeds on National Forest land will not be permitted unless a proven need to use the supplement is shown, and a detailed plan is developed and approved. All supplemental hay must be **certified weed free** hay and you must provide the proper documentation.
- b. Feeding of vitamin or mineral supplements, protein blocks, molasses licks, etc on National Forest land is permitted when used in the same manner as salt.

- c. Salting practices will be in agreement with the 10-Year Term Grazing Permit. Salt will be placed in areas of available feed to help draw cattle to them. Salt will not be placed within ¼ mile from water and/or in natural concentrations areas which receive heavy grazing use.

V. ALLOTMENT STATUS

The Allotment Management Plan for this allotment may need some updates to meet Forest Plan standards and guidelines. At the present time, direction for management on this allotment will be documented in these Annual Operating Instructions.

VI. SPECIAL MANAGEMENT CONCERNS

Keep track of conditions on your allotment. Make plans to reduce or remove livestock if vegetative/watershed conditions could be substantially harmed due to continued grazing

VII. UTILIZATION MONITORING

You will be notified when monitoring is to be conducted on your allotment in order for you to be involved.

Monitoring of herbaceous forage will be conducted by ocular estimate of utilization of forage plants within a pasture. When necessary, verification of ocular estimates will be conducted using common methodology such as weigh/clip, grazed plant numbers, or stubble height. Grazing use will be described in the following utilization categories:

| Qualitative Grazing Intensity Category | Use of Forage by Weight | Qualitative Indicators of Grazing Intensity |
|---|-------------------------|---|
| Light to no-use | < 30% | Only choice plants and areas show use: there is no use of poor forage plants. |
| Conservative | 31-40% | Choice forage plants have abundant seed stalks: Areas more than a mile from water show little use: About on third to one half of primary forage plants show grazing on key areas. |
| Moderate | 41-50% | Most of accessible range shows use: Key areas show patch appearance with one half to two thirds of primary forage plants showing use: Grazing is noticeable in zone 1-1.5 miles from water. |
| Heavy | 51-60% | Nearly all primary forage plants show grazing on key areas: Palatable shrubs show hedging: Key areas show a lack of seed stalks: Grazing is noticeable in areas over 1.5 miles from water. |
| Severe | 61 +% | Key areas show a clipped or mowed appearance (no stubble height): Shrubs are severely hedged: There is evidence of livestock trailing to forage: Areas over 1.5 miles from water lack stubble height. |
| Holechek, J.L. and D. Galt. 2000. Grazing Intensity Guidelines. Rangelands 22(3), pg 11-14. | | |

If you observe utilization levels approaching moderate intensity (40% or greater use) you will need to take action for making changes to the grazing in that area. There are many actions that can be taken, such as pasture moves, locating your livestock on different waters, moving of salt and supplements, etc. We will work with you in order to insure that any actions taken are appropriate.

Utilization monitoring will normally coincide with departure of livestock from the forest. The percent grazing use will be documented at that time. The following dates have been tentatively been scheduled for monitoring on the allotment. You are strongly encouraged to participate in monitoring.

Monitoring Schedule

| Pasture | Monitoring Date | Allowable Use | Key Area |
|----------------|-----------------|---------------|----------------|
| Twin Sisters | 06/15 | Conservative | Entire pasture |
| Cradle Mesa | 06/15 | Conservative | Entire pasture |
| Round Mountain | Rested | Conservative | Entire pasture |
| Barlow Basin | 6/15 | Conservative | Entire pasture |

Monitoring of utilization on woody riparian will be conducted in the areas below and concurrently with the associated pasture.

| Pasture | Reach description | Management | Allowable Use |
|------------------------|---|---------------------------------------|--|
| Barlow Basin, Holdings | San Francisco River within and/or bordering the allotment boundary. | Excluded geographically & by fencing. | 0% with the exception of one watering point. |

If unforeseen operational conditions require a change in the management specified in this AOI please contact rangeland management personnel at the Glenwood Ranger District. Change requests should be made in advance so that field inspections (if necessary) can be conducted. Approval of changes to this AOI may be verbal or written, depending on the nature of the change requested. Verbal changes will be documented to your file for record keeping purposes. Failure to follow the direction provided in this AOI, or other instructions (verbal or written) of a Forest Officer may lead to adverse action against your Term Grazing Permit (Part 1, Section 3 of your Term Grazing Permit).

Open and positive communications concerning all AOI content is encouraged. Feel free to contact Kendall Brown if you have any questions or concerns.